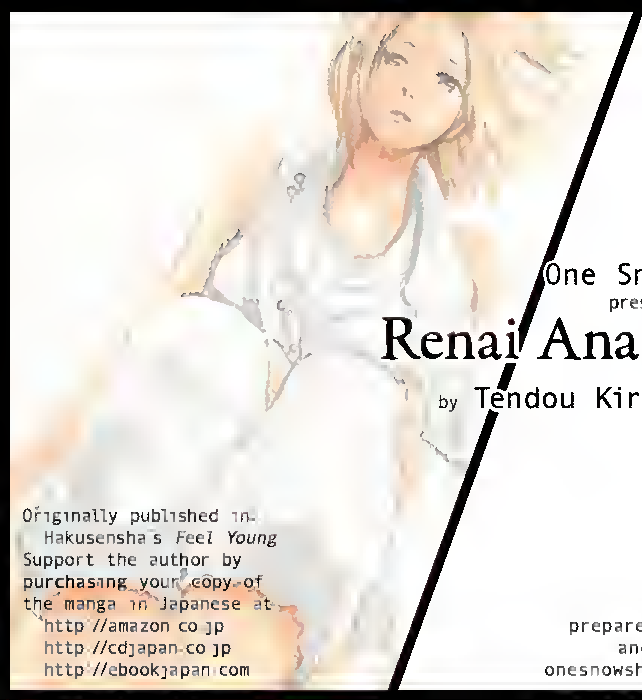

One Snowshoe
presents

Renai Anagram

by Tendou Kirin

Originally published in
Hakusensha's *Feel Young*
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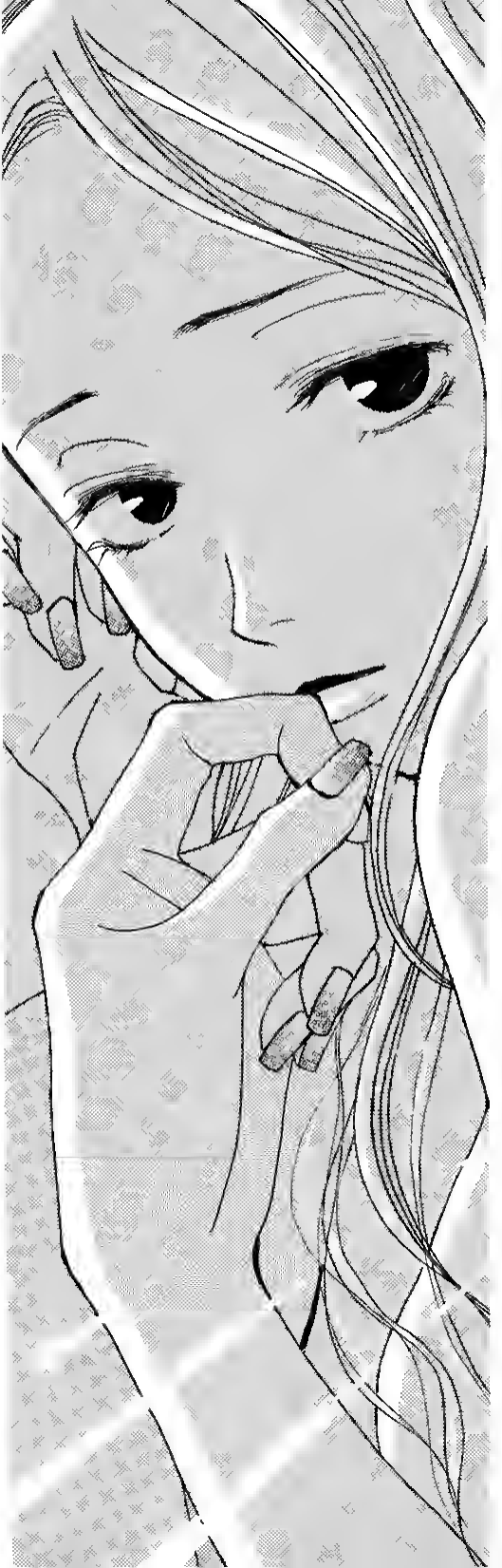
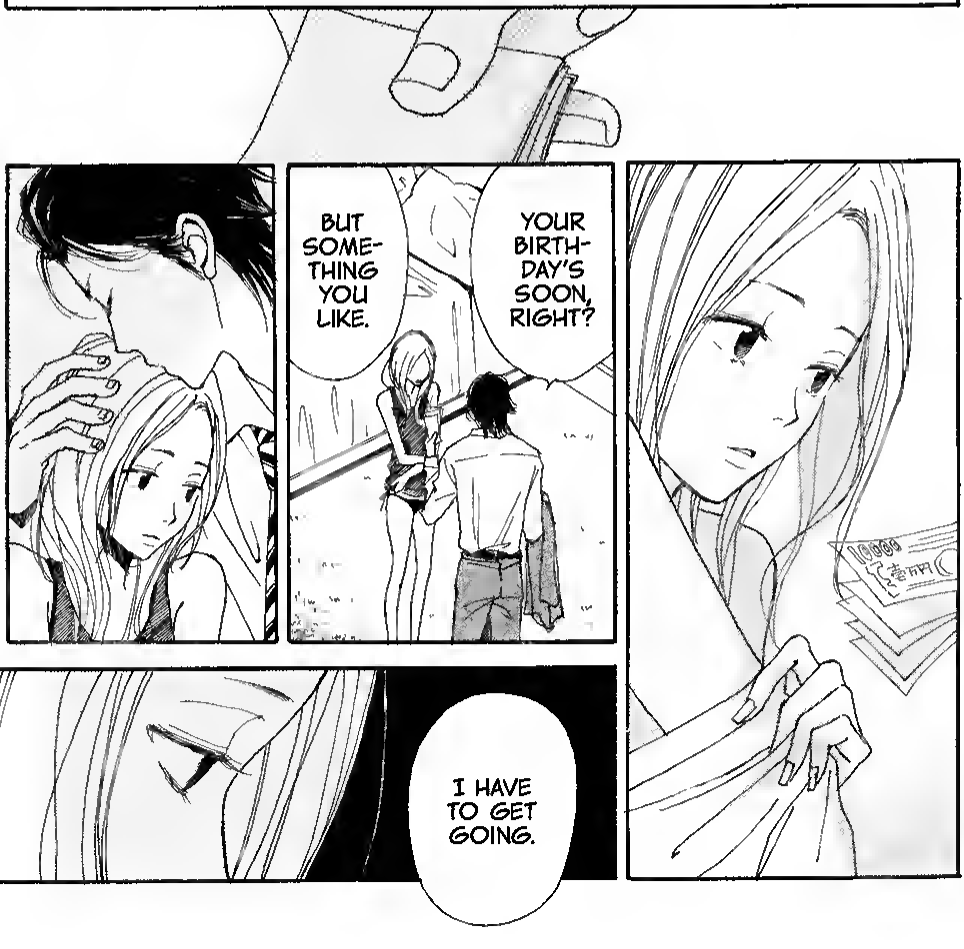
Chapter 2

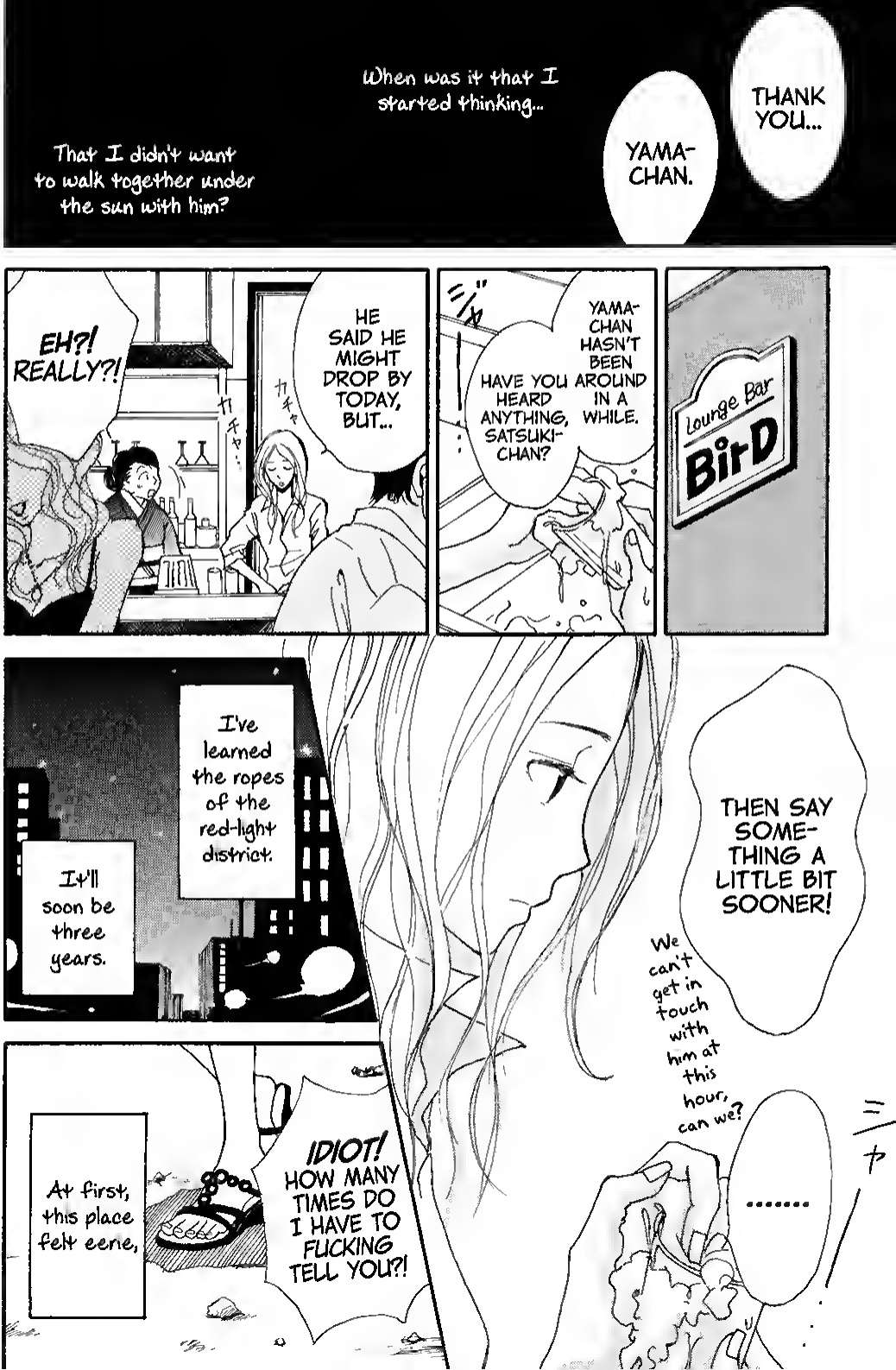


One Monday in art class,
The boy in the seat beside me
Was painting a big circle on large sheets of paper.
Peach, red,
And lemon yellow,
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?
THE SUN.
Was a beautiful mixture of warm colors
The sun he painted

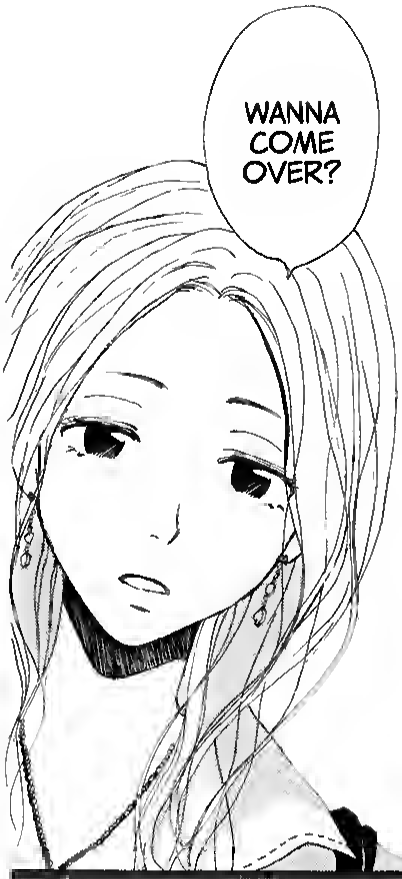
That gently

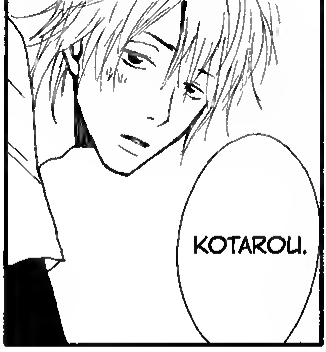
Illuminated
my heart.

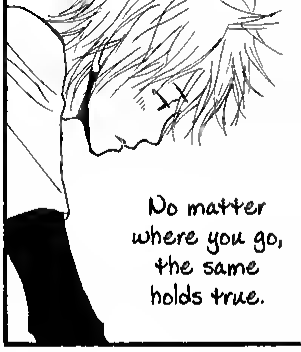


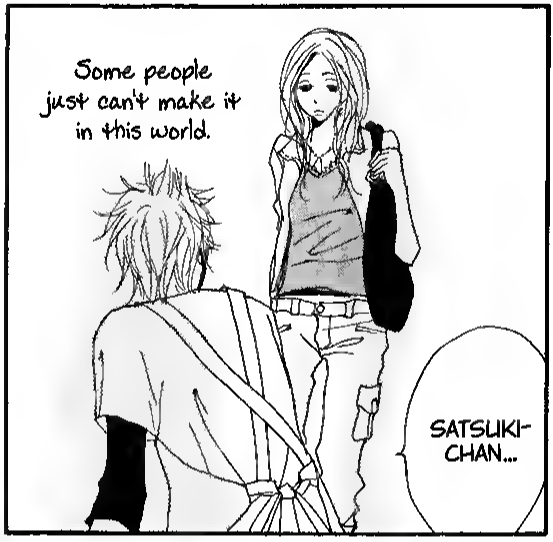

When was it that I started thinking...
That I didn't want to walk together under the sun with him?
YAMA-CHAN.
THANK YOU...
Lounge Bar BirD
YAMA-CHAN HASN'T BEEN AROUND IN A WHILE.
HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING, SATSUKI-CHAN?
HE SAID HE MIGHT DROP BY TODAY, BUT...
カチャ
EH?! REALLY?!
THEN SAY SOME-THING A LITTLE BIT SOONER!
We can't get in touch with him at this hour, can we?
.....
I've learned the ropes of the red-light district.
It'll soon be three years.
At first, this place felt eerie,
IDIOT! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO FUCKING TELL YOU?!

I'M NEVER ORDERING FLOWERS FROM YOUR STORE EVER FUCKING AGAIN!!
AH...
GOT IT?!
But now I just blend in.
YES...
I'M SO SORRY...
JUST SEEING THAT DON'T GIVE A DAMN FACE OF YOURS
CHE
IS ENOUGH TO REALLY PISS ME OFF.
COUGH
HMPH!
COUGH

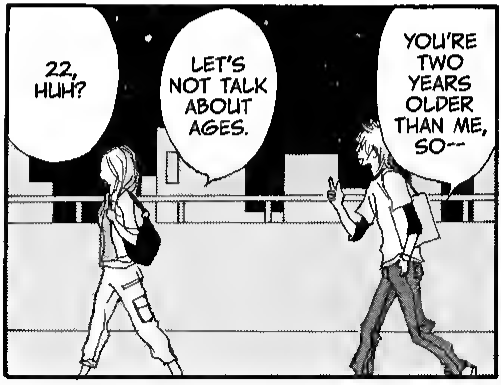

WANNA COME OVER?


KOTAROU.

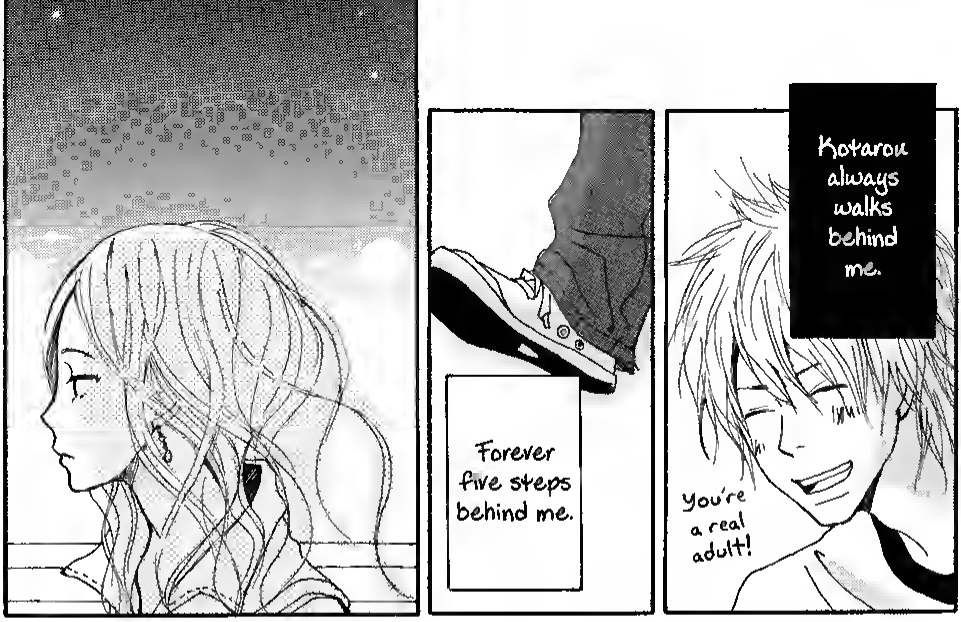

No matter where you go, the same holds true.


Some people just can't make it in this world.
SATSUKI-CHAN...

IT'S GONNA BE YOUR BIRTHDAY SOON, HUH, SATSUKI-CHAN?


22, HUH?
LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT AGES.
YOU'RE TWO YEARS OLDER THAN ME, SO--

This boy surely
Must be one of them.



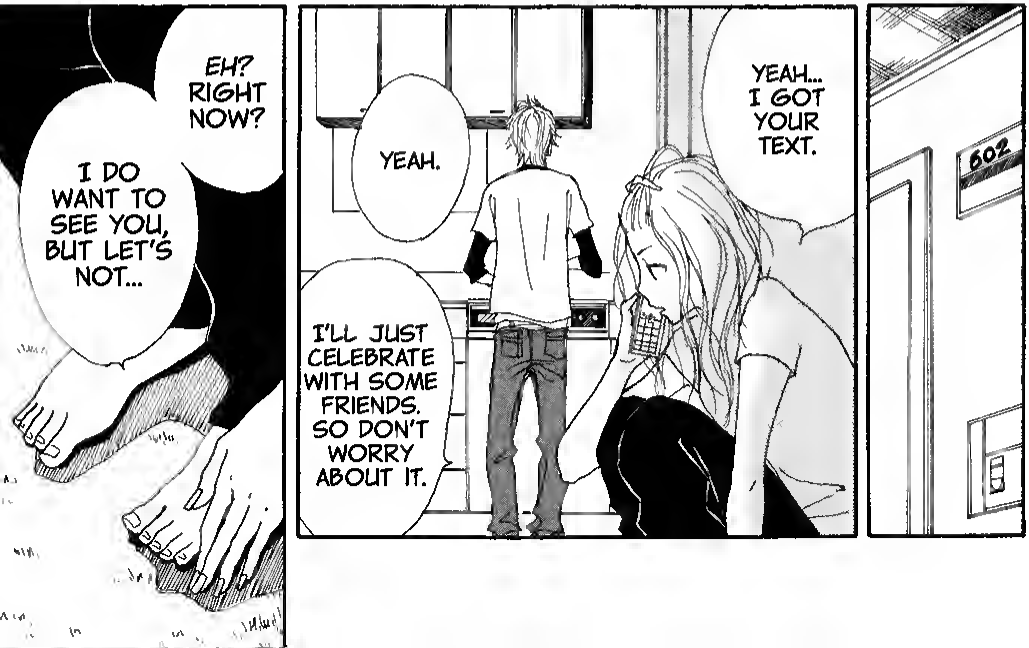
But he's never once stood and walked beside me.

We first met more than a year ago now.

OH, I KNOW! I'LL MAKE DINNER TONIGHT!

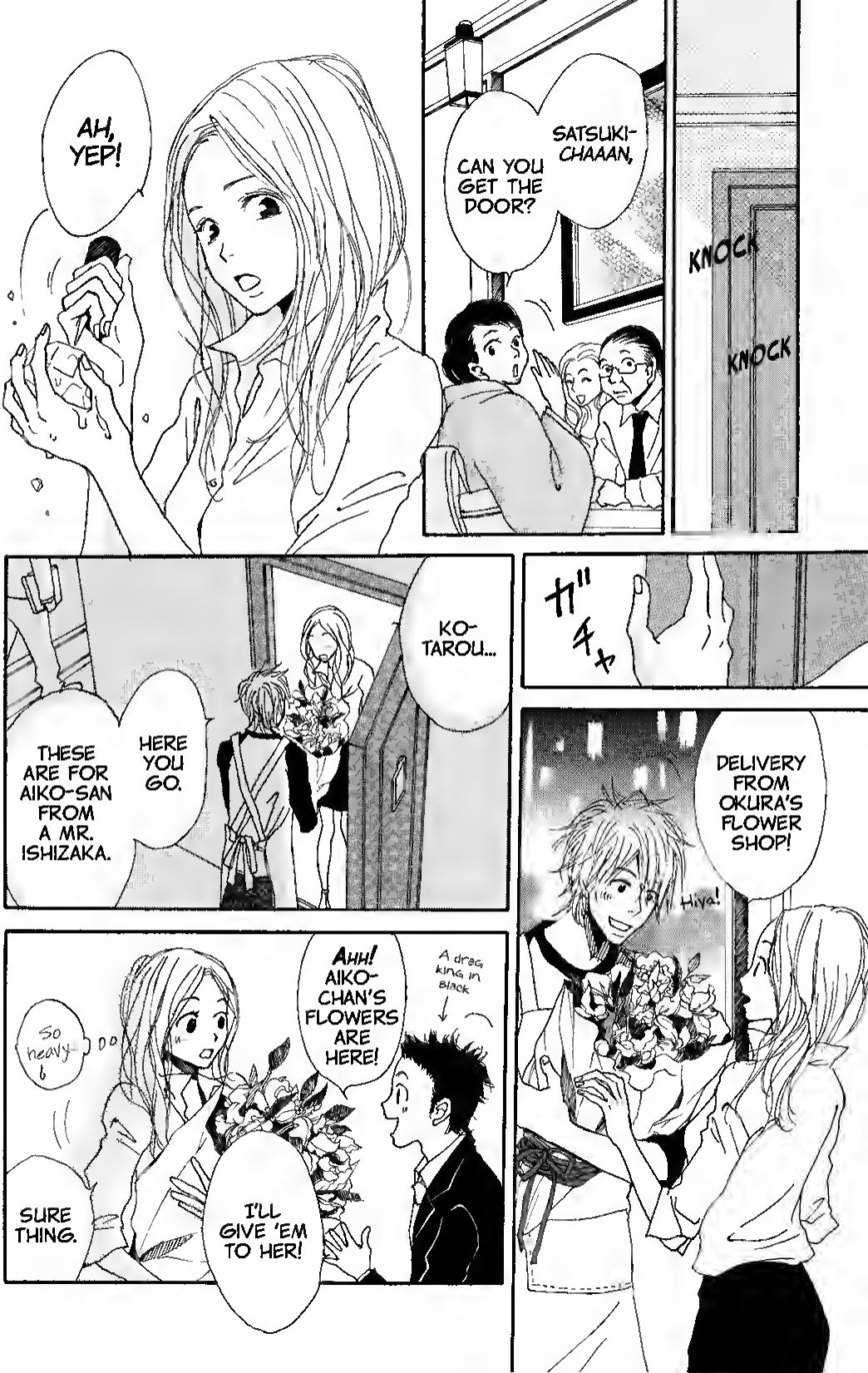
LET'S NOT HAVE ANOTHER FRIED RICE FAILURE.

IT'LL BE FINE!!


EH? RIGHT NOW?
I DO WANT TO SEE YOU, BUT LET'S NOT...
YEAH.
I'LL JUST CELEBRATE WITH SOME FRIENDS. SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
YEAH... I GOT YOUR TEXT.
602

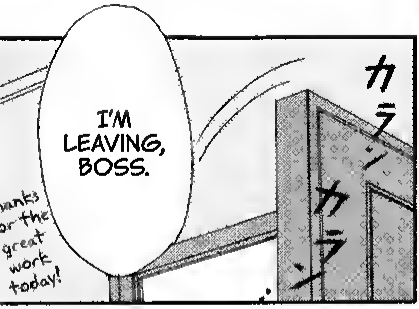
IF YOUR WIFE CATCHES ON,
I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU ANYMORE.
SATSUKI?
Hmm?
I LOVE YOU.
YEAH... I'LL CALL YOU LATER.
.....
BEEP
I LOVE YOU, TOO...
...ME, TOO.

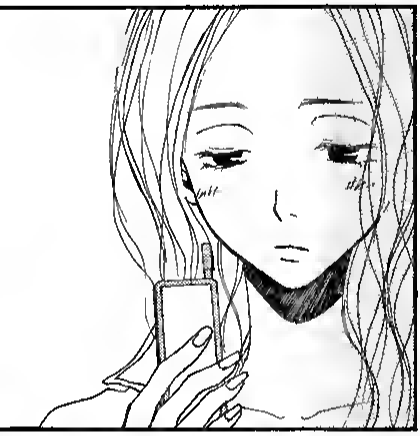
I bet mine is, too.
Yama-chan's love is weak and flimsy.
I mean,
EH?!
WERE YOU LISTENING?
カタ…
SATSUKI-CHAN, FOOD'S UP!
For someone like me who can only toy with other people's feelings,
...I'M SORRY.
Isn't even possible.
Really loving someone

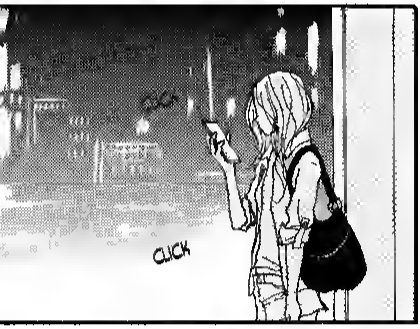

AH, YEP!
SATSUKI-CHAAAN, CAN YOU GET THE DOOR?
KNOCK KNOCK
KO-TAROU...
HERE YOU GO.
THESE ARE FOR AIKO-SAN FROM A MR. ISHIZAKA.
ガチャ
DELIVERY FROM OKURA'S FLOWER SHOP!
Hiya!
AHH! AIKO-CHAN'S FLOWERS ARE HERE!
A drag king in black
So heavy
I'LL GIVE 'EM TO HER!
SURE THING.

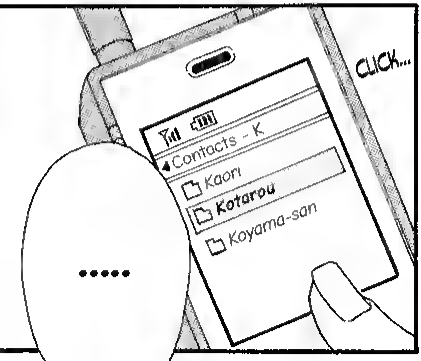
OH, AND THESE
ARE FOR YOU, SATSUKI-CHAN.
.....
IT'S MY FIRST TIME MAKING A BOUQUET,
SO THE SHAPE MIGHT BE A LITTLE BIT OFF...
Peach, red,
And lemon yellow...
I HAVE TO GET BACK TO WORK.
HAPPY 22ND!

So...
"You can have it."
It really is rather misshapen.
THWOMP
Hic
Hic
Ha
Ha
Ha
WAH!!
YA IDIOT! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE DAMN WELL GOING!
I'M SO SORRY...
Why does it make me...
.....


I'M LEAVING, BOSS.
カラン
カラン




CLICK

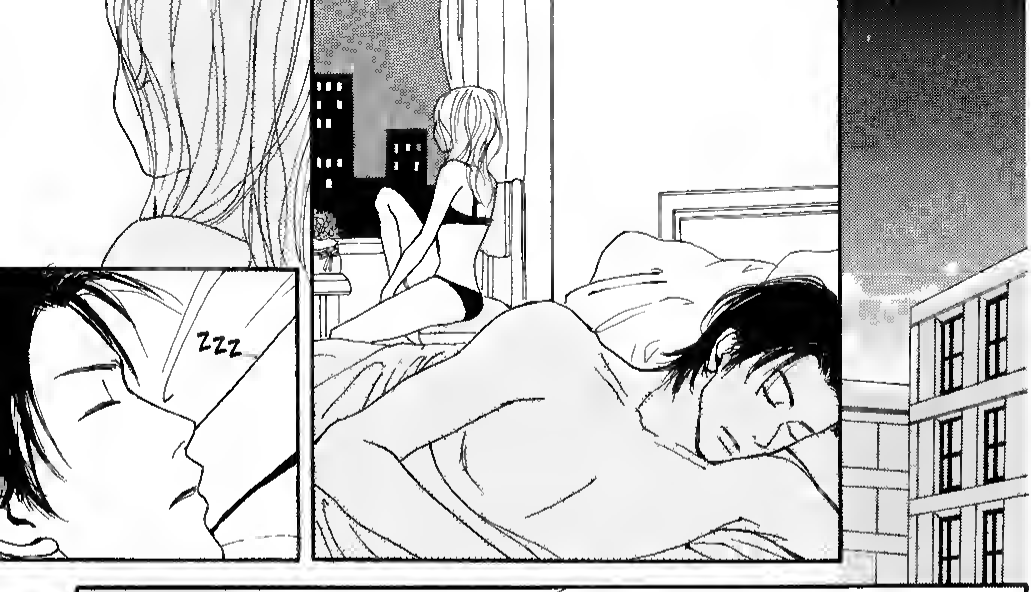

CLICK...
Contacts - K
Kaori
Kotarou
Koyama-san
.....

...feel so warm and happy?

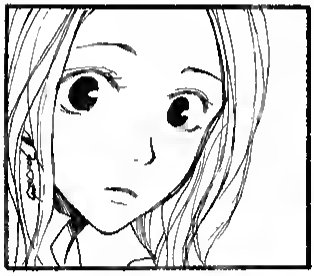
...YAMA-CHAN.
WHY...?
DIDN'T YOU HAVE A BIG RE-CEPTION?
AH,
SATSUKI-CHA...

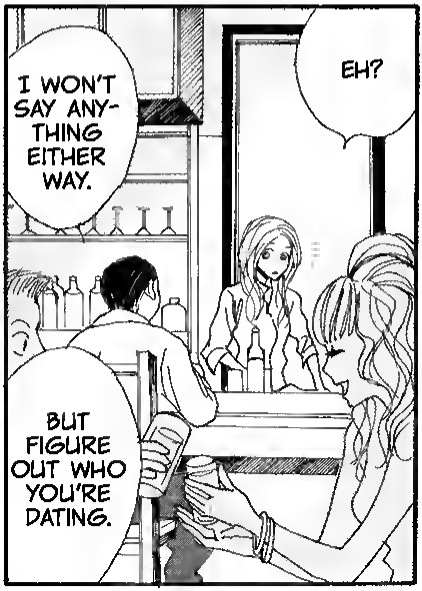
If this man can fill the gaping hole
And lessen the loneliness within me

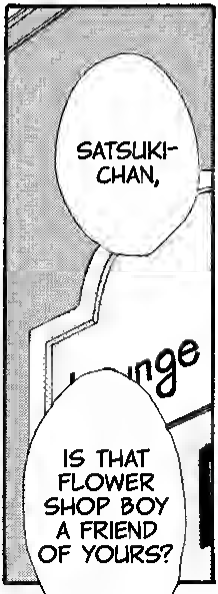
Even if it's not Kotarou...
"Happy 22nd!"


Zzz

"Happy..."




I WON'T SAY ANY-THING EITHER WAY.
EH?
BUT FIGURE OUT WHO YOU'RE DATING.


SATSUKI-CHAN,
IS THAT FLOWER SHOP BOY A FRIEND OF YOURS?

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE WAS UP TO WHEN HE FIRST CAME HERE?

HE WAS SELLING HIMSELF.
I DON'T.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT PATH LED HIM TO THIS PART OF TOWN.
BUT THE FLORIST HE WORKS FOR SAID HE WAS RAISED IN AN INSTITUTION.
YOU CAN'T GIVE A CROOKED HUMAN LIKE HIM
AN HONEST LIFE.
A long, long time ago,
Oh, there you are, sensei!
Hello, indeed, ma'am! Last time was so much fun!

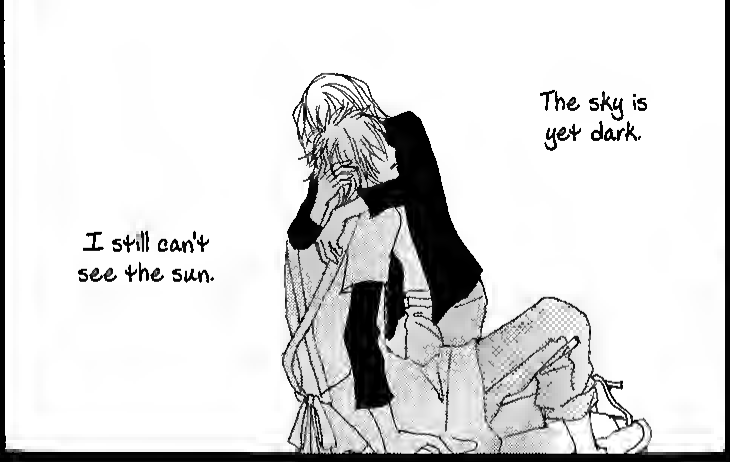
I used to walk back from school with a classmate.
And I would always match my stride to his.
Robo!
Hey Robo!
His half-frozen mouth,
His bent wrist, and the cast on his left foot
Roobo!
Rooobo!
Magnified his presence
And would sometimes draw the attention of those around him.
Rooobo!
Hey Rooobo!
CAN I BORROW YOUR CRUTCH?
Rooobo!
Rooobo!
PLUNK
OW!!
ROBOT BOY'S REALLY GOT SOME NERVE TO BE WALKING HOME WITH A GIRL!!

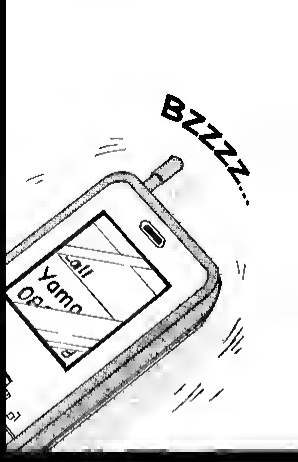
Tell me...
What does it mean to be an honest human?
I TOLD YOU I PAID FOR THAT ALREADY!
To live an honest life?
What does it mean

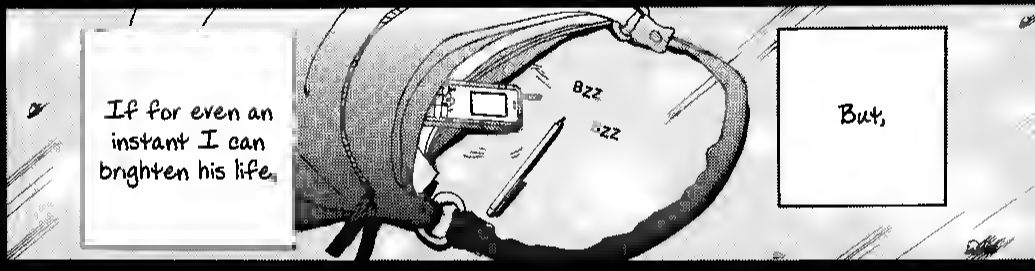
DIE, MOTHER-FUCKER!!
THONK
That's awful...
Uwah...
I was the one keeping my distance.
AHH...
HEY KID. ARE YOU ALL-
KO-TAR-OU!

WELL, THIS SUCKS...
AND YET AGAIN YOU SEE WHAT A LOSER I AM...
So that Kotarou couldn't ever catch up.
I stayed five steps ahead
.....
So that he would never find his way into my heart.
DOESN'T
IT HURT?
...WHY DON'T YOU EVER FIGHT BACK?

HURT?
NOT AT ALL...
I MEAN,
YOU'RE CRYING FOR ME, SATSUKI-CHAN.
FOR A GUY LIKE ME...
THAT'S ENOUGH
TO FILL MY HEART WITH JOY...

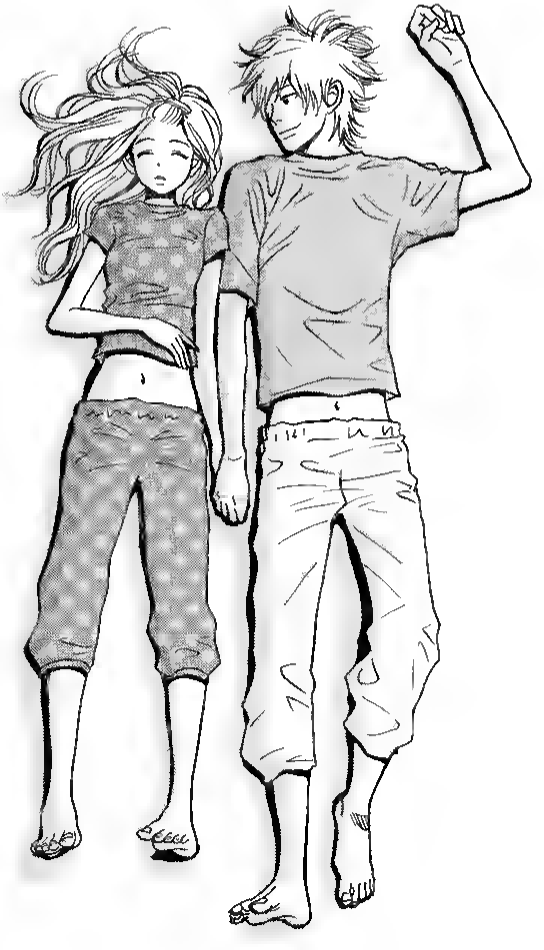


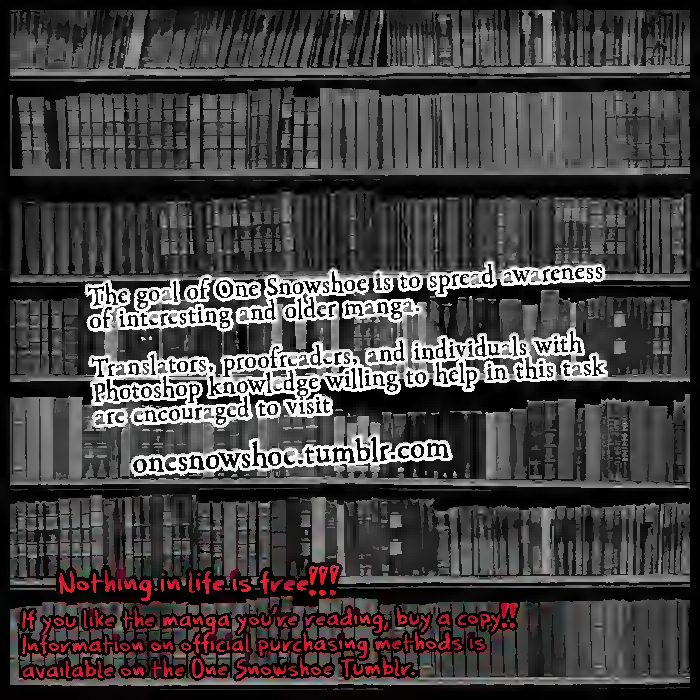




For Kotarou's sake,

I'll try burning with love.

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